

J A C O B

T H E

Plain Man

Wrestling with God in the Night of the Day,
and prevailing in the Light thereof, for perfect
VICTORY and DOMINION over

E S A U

T H E

Rough & Cunning Man

And over all that would hinder him from going up
to Bethel, the House of God, to sacrifice unto him in
the Place where he first appear'd unto him.

Whereby all may see, how I was after long Wrest-
ling with, and seeking the Lord, brought off from Pro-
fessing and Preaching that for Gospel which made not free from sin
in this Life, that I might come to know the Light and Life of Jesus
manifest in me for the Destroying the Works of the Devil, and
giving Power to supplant & overcome all that would hinder from
going up to the Mountain of the Lord's House to Worship and
Serve him in the Life and Purity of his own Spirit, which is blessed
for evermore; Whose Our and Name is

Laurence Steel.

Printed in the Year, 1677.

Jan 31 1936

Reader,

THese things were required of me to give forth to be read
in the Fear of the Lord, which (if kept to) will make a
right Application of all unto thy own Estate and Condition, either
by way of Condemning thee or Justifying of thee; and may, if
in Singleness of Heart thou readeft help to open thy Understand-
ing in the Discerning of these things, which the Lord (through the
Dayes of Judgment and Tryals that are past, and those that are
yet to come) hath and will more and more supplant & overturn;
and what he hath and will yet more and more establish and exalt
in the room thereof, that so thou mayst come timely to escape the
one, and to joyn unto the other, lest the Day of the Lord, which
will be as a Thief in the Night, overtake thee unawares.

A
TESTIMONY
TO THE
Gospel of Christ Jesus :

A S
Anciently preached and believed in by the
Primitive APOSTLES and CHRISTIANS ;
with the Manner of my coming to witness
and receive the same.

THe Gospel of Christ (as it was preached
and witnessed by the Primitive *Christians*)
is the Power of God unto Salvation unto
them that do believe, in which Gospel the Wrath
of God is revealed from Heaven against all (mark,
All) Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men, who
hold the Truth (which is the Gospel that should save
them) in Unrighteousness: (So the Truth is in Un-
righteous Men, and testifieth against their Unright-
eousness, in which it is by them held down and im-
prisoned, which keeps them from witnessing Deli-
verance thereby.) And in this Gospel there is no
Glad-tidings to any in Unrighteousness, nor Justifi-
cation in Ungodliness, but Wrath revealed against
it, and abideth upon all such as hold the Truth there-
in, until they come to bow to the Wrath of God

which is revealed in them for the cutting down of all Unrighteousness and Ungodliness, and for the freeing of the Truth which is held therein; and such come through the righteous Judgments of God to know that Righteousness, which is Christ, the Power of God, to be revealed, for the removing and taking away of the Wrath that was upon them, and the bringing them to Life and Justification, who are hereby made Witnesses, that *what may be known of God*, viz. of his Eternal Power, to sanctifie and redeem out of Sin and Unrighteousness, *is manifest in them*; for God hath shewed it unto them to be his Gospel and Power unto Salvation, who do come from holding of the Truth in Unrighteousness, to hold this Mystery of Faith in a pure Conscience; so this Gospel of Christ, which is a Mystery, was manifested or shewed to the Primitive Saints to be within. And how was it shewed? Not by Tradition from Man, or any outward Letter, but by Revelation; Therefore it is said, *The wrath of God is revealed* (mark) and *The Righteousness of God is revealed*; and *Paul* calls the Gospel, which he received not by Tradition from any, *The Revelation* [mark] *of his Son in him*. And how was it that Christ came to be revealed in *Paul*, but by the Light, which exceeded the Brightness of the Sun, the outward natural Light, which Light was the Appearance of Jesus of Nazareth, which also inwardly shewed him, and prickt him for his Persecution, which he saw not, nor was not judged for by the outward Letter of the Law, according to which he was blameless: And *Paul* being thus met with and stopt by a greater Power and Authority then that by which he was
be-

before acting, it was hard for him to kick against the Pricks of this Light; but he fell down, both he and his Companions, with their Commission from the High Priest, and all their Letter Knowledge before this Light of Jesus, which was greater then all; and here *Paul* lay until the Light that struck him down said unto him, *Stand up*; and in the rising up, after he had known the inward Pricks and Terrors of the Lord, he came to receive a Power and Commission, to turn the People from Darkness unto the Light, which he else-where calls the *Revelation of Christ in him*; and when the Saints heard that *Paul* preached of and by virtue from Christ revealed in him, which Gospel he once sought to destroy, they glorified God in him [mark, in him]. And this was and is the true Gospel, and the manner of the Saints receiving of it, *viz.* by *Revelation*, not by *Tradition* from Men or Writings; and if an Angel from Heaven should bring any other Gospel, he was to be accursed: And this was and is the true Foundation, other then which no man can lay, upon which the Ancient *Christians* built their Hope of Glory, *viz.* Christ in them, which was not another then Jesus of *Nazareth*, who was with them, and now came to be manifest in them for the destroying of the Works of the Enemy, that so he and his Works being cast out, the Seed of God, which is Christ the greater Power, might only remain in perfect Dominion and Possession of the Hearts, out of the good Treasure whereof good Fruits and Works were to be brought forth to his Glory, who is blessed forever.

Now, this Gospel of Christ I could not meet with,

or hear preached in any of the Professions that I was
 conversant in, whose Faith was, that *Revelation was
 ceased, and that there was not a total Cessation from Sin*
(which is the Work of the Devil) attainable in this
Life, nor no such Grace or Light given to Mankind, by
which they might come to deny all Ungodliness, and all
Worldly Lusts; but that, if the Conversation were re-
formed, yet there would be Lust and Sin still remaining
within to the Life's end, from the Commission whereof none
could be fully freed by any Power or Strength, which God
had given on this side the Grave. Nor did I receive
 this Gospel by Tradition from Man, or any Writings,
 Learning or Wisdom of my own, but from the li-
 ving God, who separated me for his Service from
 the Womb, and placed his Fear in me, which incli-
 ned me in the beginning of my dayes to seek his
 Glory & Honour above the Pleasures of this World,
 and by the Riches of his free Grace drew me out of
 those Wayes in which many Children were walk-
 ing to their Destruction; so that in the Feeling of
 the Movings and Strivings of his Spirit (which I
 plainly remember from the sixth and seventh years
 of my Age) I often left my Companions and Recreati-
 ons that I was engaged with to seek some Place for
 Prayer, and for the easing of my Heart unto him,
 fearing that, if I answered not his Call at that time,
 I should not feel the same drawing afterward, which
 sometimes I found to my Sorrow; and the same
 Power constrained me to cry to him, To acquaint
 me with himself, and to convert me from every
 Evil Way and Work, which I was prone to, that I
 might gain others unto him, and if he called me to
 it, Dye for him, as I read many of the Martyrs,
 whose

who were weak in themselves, he enabled to do. And being devoted to the Ministry from my Birth by my Parents, who were zealous Professors of the *Independent-Way*, they spared no Pains to instruct me in the Principles of that Religion, nor any Cost for the Educating of me in the Knowledge of that Learning that was esteemed requisite for that Work: So that about the twelfth year of my Age I was placed abroad with other Children at the School, by whose Example and Importunity I was drawn to spend my Leisure-Hours in those Sports and Pastimes which were accounted harmless, and by Reason of my Earnestness therein, I neglected to answer the Movings of the Spirit of God, which was near me, and would often have kept me back from going with them, whose Vain Words and Actions were a Burthen to me, or else would have taken me off sometimes in the midst of my Play, and called me to seek the Lord for my Soul, the Motions of which were day after day quenched by my Disobedience, until, as to my Feeling, it had ceased to strive with me; so that, when I went to pray or seek the Lord, my Heart was shut up, and my Words returned unto me again, and I stood as one smitten before the Lord, not being able many times to utter or bring forth a word, because of the Guilt and Condemnation that was upon me when I came to be retired from my *companions*; which Guilt I heaped up for some years, until the Reckoning was high between me and the Lord, whose Judgments and Indignation so seized upon me at last, as that I knew not but I was *foraken forever, and had sinned out the Day of my Visitation*, and would have bowed to any Terms for the least

least Hopes of Mercy, or escaping the *Torments of Hell* that were before me, or for the obtaining the Stirring and Strivings of the Spirit of God with me, as formerly I had felt it; but my Cry seemed to be shut out, so that my Life became a Burthen to me, and all that I enjoyed was imbittered by the *Wrath and Judgments* of the Lord, which followed me wheresoever I went, or whatsoever I did, so that there was no struggling with it, or diverting of it, which brought a Wasting and Consumption upon my Body, which I never fully recover'd to this time, & this continu'd for many Moneths, in which I scarcely open'd my heart to any but the Lord, who through his Chastizements and Rebukes, in which I did partake in Measure with Christ in his Suffering & Baptism, brought me by his Word of Power to some hope of Mercy, and escaping of his Wrath, not by justifying of me in my Sin, but cleansing me in Measure from Sin and the Love of it, which Tidings was more precious to me then the Gain of the whole World, though my Body was left very weak, and my Strength decayed, which in time was by the same Word restored to the Admiration of my Relations and Acquaintance, that knew me in my Sickness. And now my Fears and Distrusts were Banished by the Risings of the Life & Spirit of God in me, which wrought more frequently and powerfully then before, drawing me into greater Watchfulness over my Thoughts, Words and Actions, and into an higher Abstinence from the Pleasure and Delights of this World, moving Me to reprove such as dishonoured the Name of the Lord, or did offend & grieve his Spirit by the Mis-spending Time in Vanity.

in which I spared no Relations or others; and often times I was constrained to Warn and Reprove profane and wanton People upon the Road, and to ease my self in Evil Company by crying to the Lord, which brought a Fear and Dread upon them, and none durst to with-stand the Power that was with me in any Reproof, Prayer or Exhortation, which was administred in the Denial of *my own will*, in which I never went without a certain Reward of Peace in *my Bosome*, which were the best Times that ever I knew before the Truth was clearly manifested to me, when I was not yet settled in any Form or Profession, or observed any stinted Times or Way of Praying or seeking the Lord, but as by his Spirit he moved upon my Heart, at Home or Abroad, to cry unto him, I obeyed, wondering and admiring what that was which was so sweet and pleasant in its Incomes, and drew me into a daily waiting for it, as my Life, and by which I was broken and tendered in the receiving of every Mercy and Blessing as from the Lord, and burdened and wounded with what was dead and unfavoury. After which I was stirred up to seek after a People with whom I might have Unity in the Feeling of the same Life and Experience of the same *work* which I had pass'd through And in the Zeal of my Heart, as one raised from the Dead, that diligently minded the Improvement of the Time that I was intrusted with, I neglected no Opportunities in all Seasons and Weathers, without regarding the Health of my Body, to go to hear such as were esteemed *Lively Awakening Preachers*, first of the *Presbyterians*, and then of the *Independants*, unto whom I joyned my self as a Member, among

B

whom

whom I felt a Measure of the Stirrings of the Power of God, which brought Terror upon the Ungodly, and seized many that were loose and vain, with a Sense of their Iniquity, and made them cry out under it, and raised those Hungerings and Thirstings after Righteousness, which caused many to break forth in earnest Cryes and Supplications unto God for Deliverance from the Bonds of Sin and Iniquity, which was become burdensom unto them, & for the obtaining of that righteousness which was more precious in their Eye then the Glories and Pleasures of the World, which they seemed dead unto for a time: And with this Work I had Unity, and delighted to be with this People in the dayes of their Tenderness, and to spend Time in Prayer and Conference with them. After which, as we came to settle in the Form, and to stint and limit the Spirit of God, so I perceived a dying to the Life that moved and bubbled up in us, and caused us to breath and cry to the Lord, so that, when we came together, we were full of Complaints of Dryness, Barrenness and Lukewarmness that we were come unto, and for want of those living Breathings, which once we felt, which we were ready to believe that we should never come out of these Complaints, to know perfect Victory over our Corruptions here below; and here in the Integrity of my Heart, I rather blamed and judged my self (even when I knew no real Neglect by my self) then to blame the Ministry and Way that was preached, until the Lord shewed me the true Reason and Cause not to be from my own Carelessness, in the Neglect of any prescribed Means which I followed, but because of the Shortness and

De-

Defect of that Gospel in which there was no Power declared of, that might free from Sin in this Life, nor Faith to believe in the Manifestation of Christ, who was come (not only to bind the Strong Man, which some of us knew for a time, until he came to break his Bonds, and get loose again, but) to destroy the seed of the Serpent, and his Works in us, which being *destroy'd*, so as not to remain longer in us we might come to be born of God, so as not to commit Sin, because of the Seed of God, which is Christ Jesus, remaining alone in us in full Power and perfect Dominion over the seed of the Serpent and his Works: But instead thereof, they declared of a Justification and Salvation by Christ which was consistent with the remaining of the Enemy, and of his Works of Darknes and Defilement in them unto the Life's End, when the time of Redemption was past: So that after they had brought the People to a sense of sin and iniquity, and Desire of Deliverance, which was good and precious in its day, they could bring them to no further Perfection in this Life, then the laying again and again (as often as they performed any Duties or Services) the Foundation of Repentance from Dead Works, where-with their best Services were polluted, and the laying again of the Foundation of Faith towards God, whom they professed still to be going towards, but could not come to him, having not their Consciences purged from Dead Works, which all must have that would offer up living Sacrifices, and work the Works of God, which are never to be repented of. And since (according to their Gospel) a thorough cleansing from sin was not to be effected in this Life, nor could not be after this Life, in which the Redemption

redemption of the Soul ceaseth, they should have shew-
ed some Middle Place for the Accomplishment of
this necessary Work, without which there could be
no Admission into the Kingdom of God.

And in the Sense of that Decay of Life and Spiritu-
alness, and that Earthliness that was got up a-
mong Professors, who by their fashioning themselves
according to the World, had lost their Testimony
for God, I eased my self in the first publick Opor-
tunity that was offered me in *London*, the Place
of my Nativity, from these Words of *Paul*, *All seek
their own things, and not the things of Jesus Christ;*
and another time at a Fast, from the Testimony
of *Jeremiah*, *Though Moses and Samuel stood before me
yet could not my Heart be towards this People; cast them
out of my Sight, let them go forth:* Which things were
uttered not to please man, but to discharge my Con-
science, in the manifesting those Provocations, which
was a Grief to see in such as professed Salvation and
Redemption by Christ Jesus, and yet were not to be
distinguished from them who made no Profession of
him, & for my plain Dealing I met with much Love,
and soliciting to come oftner among them. Thus ha-
ving sought into the highest Professions I could hear
of, in which I was uprightly desirous to know the
utmost of what was to be found of Life and Purity,
which did not amount to that Spiritualness, and Vi-
ctory over Sin which I looked for, in a People, and
for which I was raised up; wherefore in Refusal of
more publick Employments I accepted of a private
Place in *Dorset-shire*, where I was to tutor their Chil-
dren, and pray and preach in the Family for such
a yearly Stipend, which when it came to be paid I
was

was not suffered to take any thing for preaching, which also I denyed in *London*: And in this Family where there were many of a seeking enquiring Spirit, I kept up the Family-Worship, according to the Practice and Example of the best reputed Christians which I walkt strictly by, and the Meeting on the *First Dayes*, unto which many People came, until that I came to preach from those Words *Heb. 4.v.12. For the Word of God is Quick and Powerfull, and Sharper then any Two-edged Sword, Piercing, even to the Dividing asunder the Joynts and the Marrow*; at the finishing of which Scripture, after I was retired into my Chamber the Word of the Lord came to me after this manner, *bring no more vain Oblations before me, but wait upon the living Motions of my Spirit, to bring forth that Sacrifice which is accepted with me* (out of which I could see no Offerings accepted of God, or prest by Christ or his Apostles upon any) withal reminding me of what I had formerly felt of the Quickness and Sharpness of this Word to cut me down from my vain Pleasures and Pastimes, which was the same that was now come to cut me down from my vain Oblations, by which the Spirit of God was again quencht & limited, & to bring me to that which was more pure & spiritual, and that the Issue of withstanding this Counsel of God, would be the casting me under *Despair* again, which Words, as I was required, so I declared them to one of the Heads of the Family, desiring the *Prayer-Bell* might not ring for me, for that I now felt the Word of the Lord to be really as I had preacht it, as a Sword to cut me down from all vain Oblations, so that there was struggling or resisting, or kicking against the Pricks of this living Word, or satisfying

C

of

of it, but by coming out of all that which I had taken up by Tradition, or Imitation of any, out of its Leadings, which was not out of any Disrespect to that spiritual Prayer & Supplication which was exhorted unto in the Scriptures, which I did the more earnestly watch unto; but for Fear of offending God by offering that which was become Sin and Iniquity to him, even the *Solemn Assembly*, as it is called *Isa. 1. 13*. But all this while no man stopt me, nor did any Persecution stop me, but I was the more enlarged by it; neither did I act from any Counsel or president of any of the people called *Quakers*, from whose Converse I kept myself, so as to be acquainted with none of them in that Country, or in any other place where I had lived; and also from reading their Books, or going to their Meetings, because of the Danger of Infection that was reported of them; and when a Servant that lived in the Family, where I was, inclined to go among them, I dissuaded her from it: And now having laid down all at the Feet of God in a Readiness to follow him whitherever he would lead me, I enquired of the Lord what was the Way, and People, and Foundation that he would establish and set up in the Room of what he had pulled down? and the Lord shewed me, and caused me to declare the substance of it to the Family, that according to the Vision of the Prophet *Isaiah* in the six first verses of the second chapter, *That he was now come to establish*

Read ver. 1, the Spiritual Mountain of his House, a worship
and 2. ship which Christ set up in the Dayes of his

Flesh, not only over the Mountains of Samaria and Jerusalem, but over all the Mountains and Hills which have since risen up in the Apostacy, under what Form or Denomination

Denomination soever, in all which Mountains and Hills there was no Mountain of the Lord's House, where he had his Residence and Dwelling, and therefore he would establish this Mountain for his House, unto which all the Nations (where the Enemy had set up his Mountains and House, in which he had his Seat) should flow, so that there should be no other Mountain or House of the Lord, but this alone, which should in time make the other Mountains desolate, as without Inhabitants, which Mountain man in all his Might, Strength and Wisdom, should have none of the Glory of the Establishment or Exaltation thereof, but the Lord alone, whose House it was, who would be known to be the God of Jacob, that was come forth to supplant and overturn the lofty Mountains and Hills, and all that dwelt therein, by such a poor despised People as Jacob was. Read v. 3.

And that according to the Prophet's Vision, The People that came to this Mountain of the Lord's House were gone up into a higher State of supplanting and overcoming, then was known in any of the other Mountains and Hills; & as they had the highest and freest Mission & Authority, so they had the highest Message and call, to wit, to come up to the Teachings of the God of Jacob, who was come to supplant and overturn all the Teachers of the Mountains and Hills, whose Teachings so affected those that came unto it, as that they were resolved to walk in no other Paths or Ways, but what the God of Jacob taught them, according to their Language (we will walk) nor would they go back any more to the Mountains and Hills where the Lord had no house or dwelling, nor no teaching of the poor and needy how to supplant and overcome their Enemies; for that now they were come to an higher and better Mountain, which was as Zion and Jerusalem, where

the Infallible Word and Law of God was revealed and given forth, as it was to Jacob, who had no other Written Word or Law to walk by, read ver. 4.

It was shewed me, That by and through this People (who were now come) The Lord would cause his Judgments and Rebukes to be poured out upon all the Swords and Spears which were used to force the People to, or to detain them in the Mountains and Hills, or from coming to the Mountain of the Lord's House, which needed not any Sword or Spear to establish or exalt it, or to force the Nations that were ready and free of themselves to flow unto it. And that the Lord would also induce this People, as he did Jacob, with so much Thriftiness and Prudence, as not to waste or throw away what might be improved for the good of the Creation, so that, 1. they should not make any Spoyle upon the Body by the Sword and Spear, so neither should they waste the Swords that had spoiled, but rather beat them into Plow-shares, and the spears into pruning-hooks and so turn destructive Weapons into useful Instruments, for the publick prosperity of the Nations, unto which they should become a Blessing, as Jacob and his Seed was: That their Faith and Belief should be so high, as that the Judgments and Rebukes of the Lord should never cease after the Proclaiming this Mountain, until (Supplanter like) it had brought down all Nations, Parties and Perswasions to cease from rising up one against another; and that the Concord and Agreement of the Nations should be so great, as that (the House of the Lord being now come, for which they fought) they should learn war no more, nor seek to take up any Sword or Spear, which they had beaten into Plow-shares and pruning-hooks, which now they were to learn the use of, as that which should abide when the Sword and all the Trade and Traffick of the Mountains

rains that was for War, should cease and come to an End,
read ver. 5.

It was shewed me, as these verses opened one after another, that the People unto whom I was to go, were, as to the Nobility of their Offspring, of the House and Family of Worm Jacob the Supplanter, and that as Jacob did, so they should also supplant the Nations, by the most unlikeliest wayes and Means, viz. Not by Roughness, as Esau, who was the Father of the Mountains, but by Smoothness and Gentleness; not by Policy and Cunningness, as Esau, but by Plainness and Simplicity; not by going from Home & seeking and toying abroad, like Esau the Hunter, but by quiet abiding in their Tents and Habitations; not by Might nor Force of outward Weapons, in the Disuse of which Jacob was singular from his Predecessors, but by Strength of Prayers & spiritual wrestlings, which is attested by several learned Men, upon Gen. 48. 22. not by any bloody Plots or Conspiracies, nor by any Confederacy with the House of Levi, the Father of the Priests, in whose House (but not in Jacob's) the Instruments of Cruelty were found, upon whom Jacob poured out an irrevocable Curse, and in the Hatred and Antipathy of his innocent Mind charged his Soul, not to enter into his Assembly, nor his Honour to be united to him — Not by the Dictates or Example of any precedent men or Scripture that was not then written, but by following the Guidance of God's Word and Spirit, which brought him up over all Opposition & Assaults to Bethel, the Place of Worship and Sacrifice unto God, in which Respects Jacob was singled out by the Holy Ghost, as a Lively Type of the People whom God would call and raise up from a low Degree in the last Dayes.

And

And I had not only a sight of this People by their Doctrine, Practice and, Offspring before mentioned, but also By the Principle by which they should walk, and from which they should receive Power to supplant and overturn, which was the Light of the Lord, which Light Read ver. 5. their Message should be to call the People to, O

House of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the Light of the Lord, which Light was sufficient to bring them off from the Mountains and Hills up to the House of God, where the God of Jacob teacheth and giveth forth his Word and Law, which is not the Light of man's Deeds or Examples but the Light of the God of Jacob, by which Jacob walked, and was taught to supplant & overcome; so that, as this Mountain came to be established on the Top of all the Mountains and Hills, so the Light also should be established and exalted on the Top of all the Foundations, Rules and Principles of the Mountains that walked by Tradition: The Sufficiency of which Light should not be only manifested by the Benefit of them that walk therein, but by the Forsaking of those that should reject and despise it, the Cause of which should

Read ver.

6. to the end.

be their being filled and replenished with something else, so that there should be no more room to receive Christ in his spiritual Appearance, as a Light, then there was room in the Inn, which was filled and replenished with other Guests, to receive him in his outward Appearance, because of which God would cause his Judgments and Rebukes to pass upon the Treasures and Idols, and Glory of the Mountains, which had replenished and filled up their hearts, so as to stain their Glory, until he had left them not a Staff or a Stay to lean upon, & had caused the Mark of his Displeasure to pass upon the Mighty Man, the Man of war, the Captain of fifty, the Judge,

Judge, the Prophet, the Prudent, the Counsellor, the Cunning Artificer and Eloquent Orator, so that no Rank or Degree of men, that had despised this Mountain or Light should be able by all their Power & Prudence, Art or Cunning to escape the Stroke of the God of Jacob, who is come forth in his Spiritual Host & Army to Supplant and overturn, until the Lofly Looks of Man, that looks scornfully upon this People and Light, as Esau did upon Jacob, be brought low, and his Haughtiness be abased, and he made of no account, that so the God of Jacob may alone be Reverenced and exalted in his own House and People, and there be no Mountain, House or Principle left to stand in Competition with him.

Thus being the second time ransomed through Judgment, and the Way of the Lord so plainly opened unto me, I could no longer delay seeking out some of the People here described, whom I was convinced were come, but I knew not where to find, but as the Lord put it into my Heart to go to such a Professor's House, and desire him to send for one of the People called *Quakers*, which I did, and when I came to him, and enquired of him concerning that People he told me, *There were in that Village but Three or Four Families of Poor Inconsiderable People, that were mean in Ability, and that the Men were at Harvest, but their Wives were at Home*; So I sent for one of them, whom when she came, I took strict notice of her Carriage and Words; and when I had discoursed with her about the Light of Christ, which they professed in them, and what Benefit they reaped by walking in it, to overcome their Spiritual Enemies, and to work Salvation for them; her Testimony so suited to what the Lord had before shew'd unto me,
and

and the Gravity and Savour of her Language and Deportment was such; counselling me, *To mind the Truth in me, which would bring me further, as I kept low and obedient to the Cross of Christ Jesus, for that the Lord had a further work in his due time to do in me and by me;* which Advice was of God, so that I could not but confess to the Wisdom she was guided by, which I esteemed the more for her outward *Mean-ness and Plainness*: and afterwards, as I discoursed with her Husband, a *plain Man*, in his Return from Labour, I found, *that their whole Stay and Support was in the Spirit of the Lord, whose Teachings and Leadings they waited for at all times, to guide them out of all Evil Thoughts, Words and Works, into all Truth, in which God alone is worshipped;* which Testimony best reached my Conscience, and answered the Spirit of Truth in my own Heart, the manner of whose stirring & movings from a Child, and of its being quenched, and coming to be raised again, I have before declared of, concerning which I never met with any that testified so feelingly and experimentally of the inward Work of *Redemption and Regeneration* by Christ Jesus, in the Sense of which my Heart was upon the first Meeting firmly united to them, so as from that time not to look back any more unto any thing the Lord had called me out of, but resolved, *to take up my Lot with them, which I signified to my Relations.* And when I returned in the Evening from this *plain people* and came in before the Counsellor and his Wife with my usual Language and Deportment, which was out of the Cross of Christ, which I knew was unlike to the *plain Language of the Scriptures, and Behaviour of Christ and his Apostles,* I was soon reproved for

for Respect of Persons, and lost my Peace and Life that was raised in me, and so went to my Bed under Judgment, crying unto the Lord, *Not to withhold his Peace and Comfort from me, nor to let this put any stop to what he intended further to make known unto me*, promising to obey him, if he would spare me to the Morning; which when I was risen and had seated my self, the Counsellour's Wife, whom I well esteemed and respected, came into the Chamber, unto whom, because of the Fear of the Lord, I used that *plain Language and Deportment* which I was convinced of, in which, though it may seem as a small thing, I had great Joy and Peace; and when I was asked the *Occasion of that Change and Alteration that was in me*, I told her to this effect, *That I was now confirmed by Converse, that the People which I preached of to be the House of Jacob, the Plain Man, were come, the way of whose Supplanting should be by that which seemed Foolishness and Simplicity unto the Nations*: After which it went forth into the Family and Country, *That I was become a Quaker*. And the next First Day, being alone at Home, I was required, *To go to the Place where I first spake with the woman, and to seek out their Meeting*; which I did, and when I came, I found a few People met together in a serious manner, waiting upon the Lord, among whom (though few, if any words were utter'd) I felt that *Presence and Power of God* in which I had more Satisfaction then in my own Preaching and Praying—and such a room and place this People had with me (as still they have) that I thought no time too long which I spent with them, or Pains too much to go to their Meetings, which was far distant from that Place; and the more I

was acquainted with them, the more I was united to them, especially after that I had heard their Testimonies and Declarations, and was a Witness of the Life and Power that accompanied *Mean Illiterate* Persons, such as the first that I heard was, I was the more joyned unto them, whose Prayers and Supplications were more prevalent to bring me unto, and keep me in the Light, then all the Prayers and Fasts of those that deny its Guidance were to keep me from it.

Thus, according to my earnest Desires to the Lord, to bring forth the Work which he would establish in the room of that which he had pulled down before I went out of that Family, I was for about 2 weeks among them in a *testimony to the truth*, in the Risings of which I felt more and more freedom to be witnessed from my *Soul's enemies*, and a drawing me again into a watchfulness over my own thoughts words and actions, that nothing might arise or work in my Heart but what was of God, who was now come to judge down every Evil Thought and Inclination in the first Motion and Rise of it; so that though there was an Abatement of that Bodily Exercise, which profiteth not, yet there was an Increase of Inward Exercise to keep a Conscience void of Offence, not only in the Sight of Man, who lookt at the Outward Appearance, but also in the Sight of God, that searched the Heart. And in that Family I met with much *Christian-like* Forbearance & Tenderness, not out of any Respect to the People and Principle, which they esteemed too mean and low, but out of Respect to that Uprightness which they believed to be in me: And now the time of our parting

ting being come, in which I must leave them, which (because of that Love and Endearedness that had been between us) it was hard to do, but that my Heart was taken up with Christ's being come to receive me to himself, and to dwell and walk in me as his *house* and *temple*, for which End he had separated & called me out from all that was defiled : And since I could no longer perform the Office of a *Chaplain*, as it was expected of me, which if I could they desired no other, they were willing to give me Satisfaction, according to our Agreement for the time that I had been among them upon a double Account, *viz.* of *Tutouring their Children*, and of *Preaching* : As to the *Teaching the Children*, I was free to take Consideration ; but as for *Preaching*, notwithstanding the Money was told out, and I was urged and pressed to receive it, I was forbidden by the Lord to take any, and so left it. But to clear the Family of all Suspitions & Jealousies that might arise in any touching the Ground of my leaving them, I consented upon the first Motion thereof to leave a Certificate, signifying to all that might be concerned, *That I left the Family only upon the Account of some higher Discovery of Truth on my part, not apprehending it to be the Will of the Lord to be worshipped any otherwise then in Spirit and Truth, and that as to Outward Encouragements, they rather exceeded then came short of my Expectation.* And thus in pure Love and Desires of the Spiritual Welfare of every one, I left that Family, which next to my own Relations were dear to me, who had a full Sight and Experience of my Conversation, as to the Work and Dealings of the Lord with me in that Day. This was about the 7th Month of the

Year 1673. After which I came forward to my Relations, among whom I knew not one that was inclined to the Truth, who might stand with me in a Testimony for it, but all Opposed it, and joyned with their Teachers against it, with whom notwithstanding, as I stood innocently in the Counsel of God, which led me to yield true Submission and Honour to them next to himself, I found way made for my Reception; and also opened the Hearts of his People unto me, to whom I was a Stranger, but as the Lord gave them a sense of that Upright Desire of Truth and Righteousness which only brought me among them, in whose Meetings I waited as one of the Meanest and Lowest of them for about twelve Moneths, sitting under the Droppings and Distillings of that Life and Power, which the Lord was pleased to fill others with in the Meeting, & to grow daily more and more (as it is daily my Endeavour) in the inward Experience of the Redeeming, Purifying and Quickening Virtue of the Truth, which (in the sense of that Love of God in bringing me among this People, to eat of the Bread of Life, when so many Wise and Prudent were left behind, seeding upon Husks) often broke my Heart, and caused Desires in me, *That I might never more appear out of the living Stirrings and movings of the Spirit & Life of Christ, nor stay behind it when it did move.* After which it pleased the Lord in his own time (according to my own and others Travail and Supplication) to cause his Life to break forth in me sometimes in a few words of Prayer, sometimes of Exhortation, in which the Lord gave me Power and Faithfulness to ease my self, and my Words returned

ed not to me again, but had entrance; and as I kept low and humble, giving Honour and Glory to Christ alone in his Appearance, so I felt the Increase of that Authority and Life, which made way in the Hearts of them to whom I was sent, in whose Consciences it is my desire to stand recommended, and to be felt of them who are in Life, as a Saviour of Life unto Life.

And thus the Lord having raised me up; and spared me through much Weakness and Labour unto this Day to see the Desire of my Soul accomplished in great Measure, according to my Faith when I first laid down my Ministry; I do still wait (in Submission to the Will of the Lord) for the Day, when that breathing Seed of God, which is yet left in the dead and lifeless Professions, may become ripe for the Harvest, then shall there be no Want of Reapers, who shall put in their Sickles, and gather them into the House which God hath provided for to receive all that are low and poor in their own Eyes; for want of Power and Strength to overcome that which letteth & hindereth their perfect Redemption; into which House God hath called me, as a Fore-Runner of Thousands that are yet ungathered, unto which being come up, I can't go back or down unto them, but can freely serve the lowest of them by living Supplications to the Great Shepherd of the Sheep, for the bringing them into that Fold, where he makes his Flocks that were wearied and driven from Mountain to Hill, to rest at Noon in the Bosom of their Beloved, whose Tents they need no longer enquire after, or go to the Watch men of the Night for Direction, but by the Light of the Lord

are they brought up to *Bethel*, the House of the God of *Jacob*, where they desire forever to dwell, and offer unto the God of their Redemption, Victories and Deliverance, as I do, the Sacrifice of Praise and of Thanksgiving for evermore.

And now I shall shut up all with the *Testimony* of the Pastor of that *Independant* - Congregation of which I was a Member, and walkt with for several years, who (best among them) knew the bent of my Heart, who in his *Letter* to my *Mother* soon after my Convincement of the Truth, gives this Testimony of the Grounds of my leaving them to come to this People, in which he hath confirmed what I have before-mentioned; his words are these, *The great Stumbling-block to him hath been, our Loose, Low and Earthly Conversation*: And is not Looseness, Lowness and Earthliness Stumbling block enough, especially in them that profess to be Members of Christ Jesus, and look for Salvation by him, and to be gathered out of the World? He may well call it Great; What can lay a greater Stumbling-block in the Way of the Upright, then to make so high a Profession a Cloak and Covering for so much Sin and Iniquity? Would it not be far better and more Honour to Christ, to cease professing of him, which doth but make them the greater Stumbling-blocks, until they have departed from these Iniquities? And is not this enough to acquit me from separating from such Assemblies and Congregations, that are thus polluted? Further, he saith, *He is earnest to get up to More Spirituality then he sees among us*: And must I be represented in so many places as a deluded deceived Per-

son, and one that is fallen from the Faith, and apostatized to Error, and a Saddener of the Hearts of the Upright, and prayed and fasted for, as such, and all for leaving of such People as are Loose, Low and Earthly, to get up to more Spiritualness? Or can I look upon such as true Friends to my Soul, as would hinder me from so good an Exchange? Further, he saith, *which he apprehends is to be found among this People*: Yea, I do more then apprehend it; for I have felt and experienced for some years that Spiritualness to be among them, which keeps them that walk in it from Looseness, Lowness and Earthliness; so that I have no Desire to return to them whose Conversations are so loose, &c. as he confesseth. Further, he saith, *I am perswaded, this is that which hath carried him among them, more then any Respect that he hath to their odd Opinions*: Here he hath bound all with his Perswasion from that certain Knowledge he had of me for many years, in which he knew my Bent was after Spiritualness and Heavenly-mindedness; and herein he hath spoken the Truth of me, viz. That it was Looseness, Lowness and Earthliness that stumbled, and drew me off from them; and that it was with desire of more Spiritualness that I came among this People; and my Desire hath been therein largely answered, to the Joy and Satisfaction of my Soul. Further, he continueth to say, *If we gain this by his Fall, to be provoked to more Heavenliness and Spiritualness, and to savour less of this Earth, we shall be Gainers by his Loss*: Here he should have minded his former Expression and Perswasion, and have considered, whether the Lord doth suffer such to fall whose great Stumbling is at Looseness, Lowness and Earthliness,

linefs, and who are earnest to get up to more Spiritualnefs, which is more according to the Will of God : Or are they not fallen and loft, who according to his Confession, are ftill where they were many years ago, after all his Preaching and Praying, are not got up above their Loofenefs, Lownefs & Earthlinefs, whom he preffeth, and indeed it is high time for them all to manifef better Fruits of their profiting, and to favour lefs of this Earth, which hath been the Caufe of my leaving of them, and to get up to that Spiritualnefs and Heavenlinefs, where they will find me, and fo in this Spiritualnefs we fhall be united again. But has not the *caufe* of this *unprofitablenefs* or *ftanding at a ftay* bin for want of coming to that Grace which is fufficient to teach all that learn of it, to deny All [mark, *All*] Ungodlinefs, and all worldly Lufts, which makes them Stumbling blocks in the Way of others, that fo through the denying of thefe, they might come to live soberly, righteoufly and godly, not only hereafter, but in this prefent Evil World, and fo not ftumble, but gain others by their Converfation, without which all Verbal Confession and Acknowledgments are vain and fruitlefs, and leaves them no better then they were before.

THE END

